

Latin Quarter for New York; War Driving Artists Here

Jonas Lie Predicts New Tendencies in American Art Through Return of Expatriated Painters

SOME thousands of American art students were at work in Paris, Rome, Munich and other European art centers when the great war broke out. Now almost all of them are back again in their own country.

Because of their return to their native land the war in Europe may have a marked effect on American painting. Of even keener interest to the general public, to those who know and cherish their New York, is the prospect that there will grow up here, on the island of Manhattan, a Latin quarter distinctive in itself, living its own life to a large extent, but having an individual atmosphere differing from that of the Paris Latin quarter.

There has been no organized movement yet to develop a Latin quarter, and even if there should be such an attempt it probably would fail, for a real Latin quarter must be born, not made; born, that is, of circumstances, conditions, the natural grouping together of kindred spirits, and developed through a process of natural evolution. Like Tokyo, your colony of real artists and art students grows into being without thinking or reasoning about the whys and wherefores. Thus far the returned students are largely scattered over the city—having due regard, that is, for a few special neighborhoods such as Washington Square and Macdougall Alley, Gramercy Park and some centers further uptown, the Sixty-seventh street studio buildings, for instance. Little by little the young painter folk may unconsciously gravitate toward one or another locality, and it is not impossible that in future New York yet may have its own particular Latin quarter.

Jonas Lie was speaking of this matter the other day in his Fifty-fifth street studio, and of other things in connection with the return of the native—that is, the native art student who has been away and whom the war has driven home again.

"I think," he said, "that a good many of them are just beginning to realize that they are back here in America, probably to stay. One indication of the numbers who have returned was seen in the Academy exhibition just ended, where at least one-third more of paintings and sculptures by Americans were admitted than has been usual. I do not think that the quality of the work varied very much from that seen in recent years, but I was struck by the increased number of American exhibitors.

"Yes, one runs into returned artists and students all over town. Macdougall Alley, for instance, is now a sort of home for them. I imagine that a good many of the younger men have had somewhat the same experience as Truman Fassett of Elmira, who had to come back because of war conditions, although I understand that a considerable part of his Paris studio expenses run right along. Fassett naturally feels disappointed at having to cut short the work he was engaged on and leave Paris, but I feel that he is just as well off, because the work a man does in his studio depends on the man himself. And in this aspect my feeling regarding Fassett applies to the average young man or young woman who has had to come back here from Europe.

"There are certain inherited traditions, for example, that in America America for Americans, as France for Frenchmen. In many an instance this inheritance of tradition has come down through generations; it is a spirit native to the land, to the soil, to the climate, to the very atmosphere. American, breathe. And in my belief it is a very precious heritage to preserve in art, which should be distinctive, not imitative of the art of other lands.

"For art, does not depend on geographical lines, but on the contact of the spirit. I do not mean that artists should not travel and study abroad, gaining in knowledge and breadth of vision as a whole. Yet the fact remains that in this country we have established schools as much stronger than those of the past twenty-five years ago that to-day our students do not need the French schools as they formerly did.

"One effect this war will have on American painters, I hope, will be that in sending home the men who were living abroad before the war broke out we may in time establish a more liberal school, not only so far as art itself is concerned, but also in the understanding and appreciation of the public. The greatest sin in America to-day is that of conventionality.

"Painters, sculptors, poets, composers for some reason seem afraid to be themselves, to strike out on original, untried lines. They hesitate to do this or that of their own volition. And one consequence is that we are still imitative.

"The mass of our people are just beginning to realize that art is not a means of reproduction of the natural object, but that it is a form of expression seen through the individuality of the painter. This applies decidedly to literature and also to music, but in music we're more ready to accept it.

"In painting we are not willing to accept a picture that is beautiful in itself. The public, with the exception of the 'elect,' want something, as a rule, that it can fully grasp, fully understand, and upon which it therefore thinks itself competent to pass final estimate. That is because of the well-known Turner story comes to mind, his answer to a woman who exclaimed, 'I never saw a sunset like that.' And Turner instantly replied, 'No—don't you wish you could?'

"One of the things I hope will look for in the enforced return of the students is that, by breaking away from the methods and traditions of Europe, they will develop their own personalities as artists and drink so deep of the spiritual life of America, past and present, that it will be reflected in their work. Yes, in art America belongs to Americans, and as for anything American artists, born and bred here, cannot be at their best in a foreign land for an indefinite period.

"It is not the outer aspect of life

that makes the difference so much as the real and inner conditions, away down deep in a man's soul. To us, for example, the music of Chinese is simply a distressing jangle that means nothing but noise. And I dare say that to the average intelligent Chinese our own music, or the music of Europe, is equally distressing and meaningless.

"In many respects then I think it a beneficial thing for the art students to have come back, to have come into their own again, if it may be so phrased. How many of them are here now it is impossible to estimate, but the number runs up into the thousands. Practically every class of the art schools in New York is full, and recognized painters who accept private pupils are overrun with applicants. Henri's class, for instance, has a waiting list of more than two hundred names, and I am told.

"As he talked for THE SUNDAY SUN Mr. Lie was working over a panel that lay on the floor of his studio, a scene of Viking ships at sea, part of a frieze he is painting for a Viking room in a private residence of a New York family. When he reached this point in the interview he straightened up from his panel and sat down in a deep chair by the fireplace.

"One of the disadvantages to a student, of having to come back here," he went on in answer to a question, "is that in this country he does not see as great a variety of art—so many forms of expression as he can see abroad, but large quantities of pictures have been coming over here during the past months, and when exhibited they will, in a measure, counteract this disadvantage.

"As to opportunities for leading an artist's life, a good many things may be said. Of course there is value, great value to the younger students, in associating with kindred minds doing kindred work; in associating with other young painters, talking with them, criticizing their efforts and having them criticize your own. All this tends to increase inspiration, to keep alive the fires of ambition.

"But I doubt whether New York will see its own distinctive Latin Quarter for a long time to come—if ever. In Paris the Americans, for the most part, used to rather in former years where they could live cheaply, have the conveniences they needed, and where they could be with others of their own land in a foreign city. All this helped greatly to establish an American colony in the Latin Quarter.

"But here in New York practically all one's friends speak English and are scattered throughout the town and its suburbs. Furthermore, the city itself is so enormous in territorial extent, there are so many places to choose from as residences, and tastes vary so widely, that, in my opinion, there is not much chance of having a definite New York Latin Quarter developed.

"This does not mean, let me add, that the established neighborhood groupings may not increase in number and in population. The Gramercy Park group is spoken of as including such men as Henry Bellows, Charles Lumsden, and Louis Mora. Very likely others, until recently living abroad, may elect to reside in the Gramercy Park district; and still others, students as well as recognized painters, may swell the number of those already living in this neighborhood or that where studios may be rented.

"The city I live in begins on the south at Thirty-fourth street and ends at Fifty-ninth street on the north. It runs from Fourth to Seventh avenue—a concentrated little town all by itself filled to overflowing with individual characteristics which stand out distinctly in every direction. It is only one of innumerable little towns to be found throughout the entire city.

"Does a man wish to make studies of Syrian life, or Chinese, Turkish, Italian, Jewish or other? It is not needful for him to go abroad. He will find such life right here in Manhattan Island—in this wonderful kaleidoscopic, cosmopolitan grouping of a hundred little cities into one enormous city. New York is so vast, so overwhelming, that one can spend a lifetime here and not begin to exhaust its possibilities.

"This brings to mind the fact that I have lived and worked in New York for some twenty-five years, and never saw the City College until last Sunday. I know downtown and midtown and the harbor scenes, of course, but 137th street was a stranger to me until a few days ago. And you may imagine my delight at first sight of that state of grouping of splendid buildings, tied together with the band of masonry.

"Yes, by wandering around Manhattan Island the man with an artist's eye may visit all the countries of the world. The returned students need not state the lack of opportunity for good work here if they really wish to do it.

"As to the effect of the European war on American art, the effect in a broader sense than the merely superficial, it is difficult to predict excepting from a point of general survey. I feel that the war itself is the result of a time spirit, if we may so express it.

"The spirit of revolution, beginning years ago with a spreading unrest felt rather than seen and analyzed, has worked its way through everything, into every form of life. We see its radical results in cubism, post-impressionism, futurism. In music, Schoenberg, of Vienna, and Stravinsky, of Russia exhibit this same revolutionary uprising from accepted standards. The fad of the extreme modern dance, at its height a couple of years ago, is, to my mind, but another indication of this revolutionary spirit.

"So what I mean is that the war had to come, not because of political reasons or commercial, but because of a revolutionary time spirit that had spread its way throughout the world and into so many phases of life that

man is something more than a machine; that his success in life does not depend upon the quantity so much as upon the quality of the product he turns out, whether it be art or anything else.

"That this return to the real values of life will be felt by American art students, I haven't the slightest doubt. They cannot help it, and their work will be to be original and faithful to their art."

The man who thus expressed his belief in the future of painting and who sees so many opportunities here in New York for the returned students has painted many canvases picturing life in the harbor and along the riverfronts, as well as others of familiar scenes throughout the city itself. He



Jonas Lie.



"Contrasts," from the painting by Jonas Lie.

we may even take a step backward, in future will reflect it to greater or less degree, this depending on the depth of the individual man or woman. Some day the war will be over; some day the world will gasp and give thanks for peace—and on that day there will be a growing away of much that is false and superficial and petty in art. In its place will come new pictures of real worth from painters who

was born in Norway, his mother having been a New Englander. After the death of both parents he lived and studied as a boy with an uncle in Paris. When still a mere lad, however, he came to this country to live with his mother's family, and since then he has spent his time in the United States, excepting for one or two brief visits abroad.

He is much harder to snap a photograph than most men. He has been known to escape from the school. He has been known to be a picture of the woman's school principal.

Her clear eyes are turned in the direction of the bars in the room with a look of scorn, clean, confident, as she watches a crowd of youths made in America snowball a passing banana merchant. The exciting scene is being enacted in Twentieth street, between Second and Third avenues.

The street vendor is a very poor dodger. Miss Leonard smiles faintly and the corners of her firm mouth relax for an instant.

Miss Leonard is the principal of the New York Truant School, and fourteen years experience with boys who shut the main entrances of public schools has taught her there are few of jobs worse than having the welfare of fifty boys constantly on one's mind.

"Kindness? It flashes right from her clear, straight, guileless eyes. One intuitively feels that this quality is the dominating influence in the woman's character as she sits in her office watching the snowball fight on the street outside. One feels this quality as she sternly informs a distracted, tearful, weary woman that a boy—recently committed by a city magistrate in a children's court for 'going on the books'—will not be released until he has shown a marked improvement in his general deportment and displayed a faint taste for text books.

By the shades of arithmetic and attendance it is a big contract to take four or five hundred boys of the sort in trouble keep away from school each year and so frame their character that they go out into the world after a term at the New York Truant School, with pictures of Phil Beld Kappa keys surging through their youthful minds.

Miss Leonard admits, with just a little trace of pride in her voice, that several of her alumni have been graduated from colleges and returned to her, proudly displaying sheepskins they have won by the sweat of their brow. Most of them turn out to be just honest hard working American husbands. A few—well, the least said is soonest mended.

Carroll absolutely refuses to pose for a photograph. He is about the

New View of R. L. Stevenson in Dr. Trudeau's Memoirs

Pioneer in Open Air Tuberculosis Treatment Writes Charming on His Distinguished Patient

IT is a curious, striking picture that Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau presents of Robert Louis Stevenson in his "Autobiography," just published by Doubleday, Page & Co. The book itself is a moving story of courage and sorrow, told in the simplest manner, full of human appeal. The picture of Stevenson has these same traits and something more.

It is especially valuable and interesting because it was evidently drawn by a man who could contemplate his subject from a detached point of view. It is plain that the physician did not wholly approve of the romanticist—indeed, it could hardly be otherwise,

calls to make on him. He was so attractive, however, in conversation that I found myself as it was growing dark very often seated by the big fireplace in the Baker cottage having a good talk with my illustrious patient.

"Mr. Stevenson was very democratic in his ideas, simple in his mode of life, and disliked dress parade entertainments and the restraints and glitters of society etiquette, as the following anecdotes will show. My friends the Coopers, who lived very handsomely in New York, had surrounded themselves with some of their home comforts. They had brought up their old butler from town and some silver, and the sisters tried to make the Saratoga Lake atmosphere as much as possible like the New York home life to which the sick brother was accustomed. I remember on one occasion I went to dine there with Mr. Stevenson and Mrs. Custer, the wife of Gen. Custer, was the only other guest besides my wife.

"When dinner was announced, as we walked through the hall we got a glimpse of the dining room table, which was set as usual with lighted candles and their colored shades, with flowers, glittering glassware and silver. I thought it a very attractive prospect, but Mr. Stevenson, who walked by my side, took my arm and said: 'A Christmas Sermon' and some portions of 'The Master of Ballantrae'.

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"From the Brooklyn Bridge," one of Mr. Lie's much praised works.

the two men were so different. But they could esteem each other a good quality, and Dr. Trudeau records his regret that he did not make more of his opportunities of intimate contact with a man whose writings have meant so much to the world."

Dr. Trudeau writes as follows of Stevenson: "On October 3, 1887, Robert Louis Stevenson came to Saratoga Lake for his health, accompanied by his mother and Lloyd Osbourne, and remained until April 18, 1888. The little village has had perhaps no more illustrious visitor—or at least none in whom the public took a deeper interest than Robert Louis Stevenson, and Andrew Baker's cottage on the outskirts of the village, where he spent the fall and winter of 1887-88, has become an object of historical interest.

"It was while here that Mr. Stevenson wrote some of his best essays—'Fables of Elphra,' 'The Lantern Bearers,' 'A Christmas Sermon' and some portions of 'The Master of Ballantrae'.

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